

Peer Review Plan
for the
“Updated Queen Charlotte Goshawk Status Review”

The “Updated Queen Charlotte Goshawk Status Review” will summarize the taxonomy, biology, habitat needs, and threats to the Queen Charlotte goshawk, a subspecies of the northern goshawk which lives on islands off the coast of British Columbia and in Southeast Alaska. This document will include information not available when the Status Review was originally released in 1997. The Status Review will be used to support a new “12-month finding” (a separate decision document that will follow completion of the Status Review) on whether or not to list the Queen Charlotte goshawk as threatened or endangered. Questions concerning the peer review plan for the Status Review may be directed to Steve Brockmann, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3000 Vintage Blvd, Suite 201, Juneau, AK 99801, or email QCGoshawk@fws.gov.

The Status Review is intended to influence the Fish and Wildlife Service’s decision on whether or not to list the Queen Charlotte goshawk as threatened or endangered across all or a significant portion of its range. Because of the potential for a listing decision to affect land management planning and logging on the Tongass National Forest, and also on State and native-owned corporate lands, we believe that this document is likely to impact important public policies or private sector decisions and is, therefore “influential scientific information.”

On December 15, 2005 we opened a 60-day public comment period, seeking information about the Queen Charlotte goshawk, its habitat, range, and perceived threats. We received 31 responses. We will forward a detailed summary of these comments, along with a draft of the updated Status Review, to three peer reviewers in August, 2006. Copies of public comments themselves will be provided to any peer reviewer who requests them.

We will obtain reviews from at least three scientists knowledgeable about goshawks and their habitat, at least two of whom must have experience with Queen Charlotte goshawks. We will select scientists from academia, government, or business who have published original research or syntheses on raptors, especially goshawks, in peer-reviewed, scientific outlets. Any person who would like to recommend a potential peer reviewer, or who would like to volunteer to be a peer reviewer, may contact us at qcgoshawk@fws.gov. We do not plan to convene a panel for peer review, nor request nominees from other organizations.

Once peer-reviewed, the Status Review will be available to the public, but we will not solicit additional comments on it through a formal comment period. A 12-month finding, which will be based in part on the Updated Status Review and will state whether we believe the species should be listed as threatened or endangered, will be published in the Federal Register (anticipate summer, 2006). If we find that listing is warranted, we will publish a proposed rule, which will be subject to public review.